

# Trees are Part of the Solution to Global Climate Change

## CAL FIRE is a major play on the Governor's Climate Action Team

By June Iljana, print/electronic information manager, Communications, Sacramento Headquarters

The challenge created by global climate change is daunting. Carbon dioxide is a greenhouse gas that affects changes in the earth's climate. Trees collect carbon dioxide from the air, store carbon in wood, and release carbon dioxide when burned. To make a major difference in global climate change, Californians must think trees.

"Because trees collect and store carbon, our efforts in forest man-

as much as 20 percent of the targeted reduction in greenhouse gasses."

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger announced on June 1, 2005, his goals for reducing greenhouse gas emissions in California. Through an executive order, the Governor called for a reduction of greenhouse gas emissions to 2000 levels by 2010; to 1990 levels by 2020; and to 80% below 1990 levels by 2050. On Sept. 27, 2006, the Governor signed Assembly Bill 32 (Nunez/Pavley), putting those targets into law.

"Forestry is a net benefit in terms of greenhouse gasses, not a net source," explained Crawford Tuttle, Chief Deputy Director of CAL FIRE. "By capturing carbon in our forests and using the right forest management practices in the right place, we are one-fifth of the solution."

Tuttle represents CAL FIRE on the Climate Action Team, a consortium of state departments charged with implementing what

is considered the world's most comprehensive greenhouse gas reduction strategy. CAL FIRE's piece of the state carbon reduction strategy is based on a five point plan for greater efficiency in "carbon sequestration" or storing carbon in wood.

**Grow trees faster and smarter to store more carbon.** Forest management can improve carbon storage substantially. The California Forest Improvement Program provides grants and technical assistance to help small forestland owners improve their management.

**Control wildfires to reduce carbon dioxide emissions in smoke.** Aggressive firefighting to control 95 percent of fires at 10 acres or less combined with good forest management can reduce the number of large fires that can release 35 to 75 tons of carbon per fire and destroy forests.

**Conserve forest landscapes to retain trees and optimize carbon storage.** CAL FIRE is working with the Forest Legacy Program and the Wildlife Conservation Board to acquire forest lands or easements from willing sellers for conservation purposes.

**Increase urban and rural tree planting statewide for urban cooling and to capture carbon dioxide.** The goal is to plant five million trees between now and 2020 using bond funds to support projects such as "One Million Trees L.A." and "Sacramento Green Print." Trees cool the urban environment and reduce the energy used for air conditioning.

**Promote the use of wood from forests to diversify our energy supply.** CAL FIRE is working with the California Energy Commission and the Public



agement and fire protection are key elements in reducing greenhouse gasses in the atmosphere," said CAL FIRE Director Ruben Grijalva. "CAL FIRE oversees areas of the state's economy and environment that can contribute

Utilities Commission to increase the amount of energy produced from woody forest residue (biomass) as an alternative to fossil fuels.

“Climate change affects temperature, precipitation and localized weather patterns. These

changes will affect the frequency and intensity of wildfires; forest growth, composition, and distribution; and forest health,” explained Tuttle. “At this point, California’s forests can be part of the solution to global climate change. If we aren’t successful,

the nature of the fire threat will certainly increase.”

For more information on the Climate Action Team’s plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in California or the Governor’s other environmental action initiatives, visit [www.climatechange.ca.gov](http://www.climatechange.ca.gov).

## Communications Corner

### Wildfire Awareness Week 2007

*By Alisha Herring, staff services analyst, Communications, Sacramento Headquarters*

Wildfire Awareness Week 2007, May 6-12, offers CAL FIRE an annual opportunity to get the word out about wildland fire prevention and preparedness for all who live in wildfire areas of California.

This year’s theme, “**Why 100 feet?... Because defensible space is YOUR responsibility**,” promotes the idea that protecting a home starts with the homeowner. The CAL FIRE Communications Office is working with units statewide to reach as many property owners as possible with this message by hosting a week’s worth of public events statewide.

CAL FIRE Headquarters will kick off Wildfire Awareness Week with a ceremony at the State Capitol in Sacramento on Monday, May 7. A number of distinguished guests will be on-hand to promote safety as well as to officially introduce the term CAL FIRE. Vehicles freshly striped with the CAL FIRE markings will debut at the Capitol and will travel to each event throughout the week. We have also prepared displays featuring defensible space, CAL FIRE, and a demonstration of the

vast responsibilities our department has and responds to.

The Capitol event will be followed by events in El Dorado, Shasta, Fresno, San Diego and Riverside Counties. During each event, CAL FIRE will focus public and media attention on the how and why of defensible space. CAL FIRE has arranged to run a week of pre-event radio promotion in each area leading up to the event followed by a live radio broadcast at each event location.

The day of the event, the host unit will provide media tours that showcase homes with good defensible space and crews assigned to fire prevention projects. In the afternoon, the public is invited to come out and participate in defensible space and fire safety demonstrations, see equipment displays, pick up fire safety educational materials, and talk with fire fighters and fire prevention specialists.

In addition, CAL FIRE has partnered with local hardware stores to raffle a limited number of yard tools such as saws, rakes, trimmers and gloves at each event to encourage residents to create their own defensible space.

#### Event Schedule

Monday, May 7

City: Sacramento

Time: 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Location: State Capitol - Kick-off with the presentation of the Governor’s Proclamation.

County: El Dorado County

Time: 2 p.m. – 6 p.m.

Location: Cameron Park Station, 3200 Country Club Dr, Cameron Park

Tuesday, May 8

County: Shasta County

Time: 4 p.m. – 6 p.m.

Location: Sunset Marketplace, 3685 Eureka Way, Redding

Wednesday, May 9

County: Fresno County

Time: 4 p.m. – 6 p.m.

Location: Millerton State Park, 5290 Millerton Road, Friant

Friday, May 11

City: San Diego County

Time: 4 p.m. – 6 p.m.

Location: San Diego Headquarters, 2249 Jamacha Rd, El Cajon

Saturday, May 12

City: Riverside County

Time: 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Location: Hemet Air Attack Base, 4710 West Stetson Ave, Hemet